

November 15, 2012

F-35 leadership visits NAS Patuxent River test force: Air Force Maj. Gen. Bogdan continues tour of F-35 facilities



Vice Adm. David Venlet, program executive officer for the F-35 Lightning II program and his deputy, Air Force Maj. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, visit the Patuxent River integrated test force Nov. 7, part of a series of similar tours around the country to F-35 development facilities. (Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The program executive officer for the [F-35 Lightning II program](#) and his deputy visited Naval Air Station Patuxent River's integrated test force Nov. 7, part of a series of similar tours around the country to the aircraft's development facilities.

During the visit, program head [Navy Vice Adm. David Venlet](#) introduced his successor Air Force [Maj. Gen. Christopher Bogdan](#) and noted the progress of the F-35 in test and evaluation.

"You've done a marvelous job," Venlet told a crowded conference room of more than 100 F-35 test personnel. "We have a lot more work to do together yet, but you're on a good foundation. And we've put a lot of minds at ease because of what you're demonstrating."

The aircraft program's integrated test force, comprising approximately 900 industry, military and government civilians, evaluates the F-35B and F-35C naval variants of the Lightning II.

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Bogdan, a veteran test pilot, is familiar with the work performed at Patuxent River.

"I have great confidence in the test team at Pax," Bogdan said. "They are some of the most talented and dedicated people I've ever seen on an acquisition program and I'm proud to have them on our team."

In the past year, the force successfully completed the [first airborne weapons separation](#) for any version of the F-35. In addition, the Patuxent River team completed critical testing for the F-35C carrier variant's arresting hook system redesign and [initial sea trials](#) for the F-35B short take off and vertical landing (STOVL) variant.

Through test and evaluation, the Patuxent River team retired enough technical risk for the STOVL variant, enabling [Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta](#) to announce that he was lifting early the two-year probation placed on the F-35B during a visit to the base Jan. 20.

In the next year, the Patuxent River F-35 test force is planning the second sea trials for the F-35B, will continue expanding the weapons separation envelope and continue testing on the F-35C's arresting hook redesign effort.

ABOUT THE F-35 LIGHTNING II

The [F-35B](#) is the variant of the Lightning II designed for use by the U.S. Marine Corps, as well as F-35 international partners in the United Kingdom and Italy. The F-35B is capable of short takeoffs and vertical landings to enable air power projection from amphibious ships, ski-jump aircraft carriers and expeditionary airfields. The [F-35C carrier variant](#) of the Lightning II is distinct from the F-35A and F-35B variants with its larger wing surfaces and reinforced landing gear; features used to withstand catapult launches and deck-landing impacts associated with the demanding aircraft carrier environment. The F-35B and F-35C naval variants are undergoing [flight test and evaluation](#) at NAS Patuxent River prior to delivery to the fleet.